

get by. I'm happy to be alive and I'm happy to be able to tell my story." We should all live by this sentiment.

Madam Speaker, I join her family and friends in wishing Treva Green happy 100th birthday! I am sure they are excited to see her reach this incredible milestone.

# REMARKS ON TERRI FREEMAN LEAVING THE NATIONAL CIVIL RIGHTS MUSEUM

## HON. STEVE COHEN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, January 25, 2021*

Mr. COHEN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to bid a reluctant farewell to Terri Lee Freeman, who for the past six years has served as President of the National Civil Rights Museum in Memphis. Ms. Freeman has done an exceptional job leading the nation's premiere Civil Rights museum, located in the Lorraine Motel where Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated in 1968. During her tenure, Ms. Freeman organized the 50th anniversary of that seminal event in American history—"MLK50—Where Do We Go From Here?"—featuring such national figures as our late Congressional colleague, John Lewis; the Reverend Jesse Jackson, former Polish President and 1983 Nobel Peace Prize laureate Lech Walesa; the Reverend William Barber of the Poor People's Campaign, and many others who traveled from around the world to spend time in our showcase institution. In her six years, she saw the museum's budget double to \$9.7 million while overseeing a staff of 50 and an increased physical footprint. She also helped affiliate the museum with the Smithsonian Institution and its traveling exhibits. Also while at the museum, she began "Unpacking Racism in Action," a series of community dialogues aimed at confronting implicit and structural bias. Last year, she was named "Memphian of the Year" by Memphis Magazine. Before moving to Memphis, she was president of what is now the Greater Washington Community Foundation. In her 18 years with that organization, she increased the organization's assets from \$52 million in 1996 to more than \$350 million in 2014. A proven leader, Ms. Freeman was a 2016 graduate of Leadership Memphis and served on the boards of the Community Foundation of Greater Memphis, the New Memphis Institute and the Memphis Convention and Visitors Bureau, as well as being a member of the Tennessee Educational Equity Coalition Steering Committee. Born in Chicago, Ms. Freeman is a graduate of Hamtramck High School (1977) and the University of Dayton (1981 through 1983) and received a Master's degree in organizational communications from Howard University. Ms. Freeman is married to Dr. Bowyer G. Freeman, senior pastor of the New Saint Mark Baptist Church in Baltimore, and the mother of three grown daughters. I wish Ms. Freeman every success in her new post as executive director of the Reginald Lewis Museum of African American History and Culture in Baltimore. I'm pleased to read that Ms. Freeman will always consider herself an "adopted child" of our city where her work and dedication will remain her lasting legacy.

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. DOUG LAMBORN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, January 25, 2021*

Mr. LAMBORN. Madam Speaker, I had intended to vote "Yea" on Roll Call No. 18.

SUPPORTING H.R. 335, THE LEGAL EXCEPTION NECESSARY TO APPOINT LLOYD J. AUSTIN III AS PRESIDENT BIDEN'S SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

### HON. PETER A. DeFAZIO

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, January 25, 2021*

Mr. DeFAZIO. Madam Speaker, on January 21, I voted in support of H.R. 335, legislation to provide a waiver for former General Lloyd J. Austin III to serve as President Biden's Secretary of Defense. The Senate confirmed Austin as Secretary of Defense on January 22.

Civilian control of the military is a foundational tenet of our constitutional democracy, and I fully support all efforts to maintain and reinforce this essential principle.

Federal law requires that any Secretary of Defense nominee who has served in the military must be retired from the military for at least seven years, unless Congress grants a waiver. Until Congress granted a waiver for President Trump's nominee for Secretary of Defense, former General Jim Mattis, in 2017, a waiver of this kind had only occurred one other time: for former General George Marshall in 1950.

I believe this seven-year "cooling off" period for former military officials is an important mechanism to ensure continued civilian control of the U.S. military, and I believe Congress should not make a habit of granting these waivers.

However, I am confident that Secretary Austin is committed to upholding civilian control of the military. As he indicated in his Senate confirmation testimony on January 19, Austin believes that "the safety and security of our democracy demands competent civilian control of our Armed Forces, the subordination of military power to the civil. I know that being a member of the president's Cabinet—a political appointee—requires a different perspective and unique duties from a career in uniform."

I am also encouraged by Secretary Austin's statements of belief in military restraint, rather than interventionism, as well as aspects of his service under the Obama administration, including overseeing the withdrawal of 150,000 U.S. troops from Iraq, his opposition to a U.S. war and regime change in Syria, his dedication to diplomacy, and his support for avoiding civilian casualties.

Austin is also the first Black Secretary of Defense in U.S. history. While there is still a significant lack of diversity in the top ranks of the military, Austin's appointment is an important step in the right direction.

It is also notable that Austin will lead the Pentagon during a time when white supremacy and ideological extremism are on the rise among military ranks. In his January 19 Senate confirmation hearing, Austin pledged to

"fight hard to stamp out sexual assault, to rid our ranks of racists and extremists, and to create a climate where everyone fit and willing has the opportunity to serve this country with dignity."

Civilian control of the military is not only achieved via the Secretary of Defense. Unlike President Trump, who appointed former generals to serve in numerous civilian and national security roles in the White House, President Biden has demonstrated a clear commitment to civilian control of the military by appointing non-military civilians in key national security posts.

While I support Congress's waiver for Secretary Austin, I strongly encourage the Biden administration and future administrations to avoid appointing additional former military officials as Secretary of Defense if they have not completed their seven-year cooling off period. I also will not hesitate to criticize Secretary Austin and the Biden administration—as I have done with previous Republican and Democratic administrations—when I disagree with their policies and actions. It is essential we rein in our bloated and wasteful defense spending, tackle the massive waste, fraud, and abuse within the Pentagon, and that Congress reassert its Constitutional war powers and put an end to our endless wars.

## INTRODUCTION OF THE BUILDING UNITED STATES INFRASTRUCTURE AND LEVERAGING DEVELOPMENT (BUILD) ACT

### HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, January 25, 2021*

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Speaker, today I introduced the Building United States Infrastructure and Leveraging Development (BUILD) Act. This bipartisan legislation will spur billions of dollars in private investment toward surface transportation and freight transfer facilities, while giving state and local governments an important instrument to improve their communities.

It is no secret that America's infrastructure is falling apart while we fall behind our global competitors. America's roads, bridges, tunnels, and transit systems face a funding gap of more than \$1.1 trillion by 2025. One in five miles of highway pavement is in poor condition and congestion costs the U.S. economy nearly \$305 billion annually. Continued underinvestment will lead to longer trips to work or school, more costly maintenance expenses, and unsafe road conditions. We must do better.

As of December 1, 2020, the Department of Transportation doesn't have any additional surface transportation private activity bonds available, as the entire \$15 billion statutory cap has been issued or allocated. This legislation builds on the success of these bonds by doubling the federal volume cap and clarifying that the use of the bonds must maintain strong labor standards. While public-private partnerships are not a panacea for solving all of our transportation challenges, they are an important piece of rebuilding and renewing America. I look forward to working with my colleagues in the House and Senate to enact this legislation as part of an infrastructure investment bill.